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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR (JONES), EUR/SCE (FOOKS, HYLAND)

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BK](#)

SUBJECT: SNSD RATCHETS UP INFLAMMATORY RHETORIC

Classified By: Polcouns Michael Murphy for Reasons 1.4. (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) A parliamentary debate on May 13 on constitutional reform turned ugly when House of Representatives Deputy Speaker Milorad Zivkovic from the Alliance of Independent Social Democrats (SNSD) proposed conducting public opinion surveys on whether citizens of Bosnia want to continue living together. He also proposed surveying the population on their preferred models for future Bosnian governing structures. Zivkovic's suggestion provoked a sharp reaction from Bosniak delegates who called it a disguised call for a referendum on secession. According to press reports, Sefik Dzaferovic, from the Party of Democratic Action (SDA), said that Zivkovic should not "play with the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Bosnia," by proposing such a "referendum disguised as a poll."

¶2. (C) This led to further sharp exchanges between Serb and Bosniak parliamentarians in which both sides claimed their opponents' comments were reminiscent of pre-war rhetoric. SNSD parliamentarian Milica Markovic compared Djaferovic's remarks to comments made by Bosniak war-time leader Alija Izetbegovic in 1992, and Adam Huskic from the Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina (SBiH) compared Zivkovic's comments to calls by Serbian wartime leader and Hague indictee Radovan Karadzic for a referendum that was a prelude to the 1992 war. Huskic reportedly said that tanks and airplanes were unable to destroy the Bosnian nation then and they would be unable to do so now.

Dodik Again Slams State Court and Prosecutors

¶3. (C) Zivkovic's proposal followed on the heels of recent comments by SNSD President Milorad Dodik challenging the legality of the State Court and Prosecutor's Office. In response to questions about the Prosecutor's Office investigation into his alleged corruption, Dodik said on May 12 that that the State Court and Prosecutor's office were "illegitimate and illegal institutions" with which he would not cooperate. Dodik said the Court and the Prosecutor's Office lacked legitimacy because they were allegedly created under the pressure of threats by the High Representative. He argued further that the investigation into his alleged corruption is probably "retaliation" for his position opposing the extension of the mandates of foreign judges and prosecutors beyond 2009. In a statement on May 8, Dodik made similar ad hominem attacks on the State court and Prosecutor's Office, asserting that neither institution should be respected, claiming they did not need to exist, and vowing to work towards their destruction.

Comment

¶4. (C) Zivkovic, who eventually withdrew his proposal, clearly must have known that his call for an opinion survey would be inflammatory. His comments seemed aimed at throwing a harsh dose of cold water on efforts by the SDA to initiate discussions on constitutional reforms that could create a stronger and more functional state. Combined with Dodik's remarks on the State Court and State Prosecutors, Zivkovic's comments represent a further ratcheting up of SNSD's obstructionist rhetoric.

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